

## II. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1 - 21. (Canceled).

22. (Currently Amended) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion positioned adjacent to a front pelvic area and extending from a waist area to a crotch area when the article is worn by a user;

a rear portion joined to the front portion, the rear portion being positioned adjacent to a rear pelvic area and extending from the waist area to the crotch area when the article is worn by the user, further wherein the front portion and the rear portion extend vertically to an article waistline, being substantially a same level vertically when worn by the user; and

a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion, further wherein the back guard fully extends above the article waistline ~~rear portion and the front portion~~ when the article is worn by the user, wherein the back guard comprises an absorbent material and a separately positioned elastic.

23. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 22, wherein the elastic is positioned at a predetermined location about a periphery of the back guard, and wherein the absorbent material is positioned centrally on the back guard.

24. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 22, wherein the back guard further comprises

opposing side portions and a top portion.

25. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 24, wherein the side portions are curved.

26. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 24, wherein the side portions are linear.

27. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 22, wherein the back guard is curved.

28. (Previously Presented) The incontinence article of claim 22, wherein the back guard has a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches, and wherein the back guard extends to a middle back area when the article is worn by the user.

29. (Canceled).

30. (Currently Amended) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion positioned adjacent to a front pelvic area and extending from a waist area to a crotch area when the article is worn by a user;

a rear portion joined to the front portion, the rear portion being positioned adjacent to a rear pelvic area and extending from the waist area to the crotch area when the article is worn by the user, further wherein the front portion and the rear portion extend vertically to an article waistline, being substantially a same level vertically when worn by the user; and

a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion, further wherein the back guard

fully extends above the article waistline ~~rear portion and the front portion~~ when the article is worn by the user, wherein the back guard having a T-shaped outline, comprises a vertical extension and opposing horizontal extensions that extend laterally outward from outer edges of the vertical extension.

31. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the back guard further comprises an absorbent material and separately positioned elastic.

32. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 31, wherein the elastic is positioned at a predetermined location about a periphery of the back guard.

33. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 31, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the horizontal extensions.

34. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 31, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the vertical extension.

35. (Previously Presented) The incontinence article of claim 31, wherein the elastic is positioned about a periphery of the horizontal extensions and a periphery of the vertical extensions.

36. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the back guard has a width greater than a width of the rear portion.

37. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the vertical extension includes opposing side portions and a top portion.

38. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the horizontal extensions diagonally couple to the front portion.

39. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the horizontal extensions laterally couple to the front portion.

40. (Previously Presented) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the vertical extension extends to a middle back area when the article is worn by the user.

41. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein the vertical extension has a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches.

42. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 30, wherein each horizontal extension has a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches.

43 - 55. (Canceled).

56. (Currently Amended) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion positioned adjacent to a front pelvic area and extending from a waist area to a crotch area when the article is worn by a user;

a front guard extending vertically from the front portion to a middle chest area of the user;

a rear portion joined to the front portion, the rear portion being positioned adjacent to a rear pelvic area and extending from the waist area to the crotch area when the article is worn by the user, further wherein the front portion and the rear portion extend vertically to an article waistline, being substantially a same level vertically when worn by the user;

a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion to a middle back area when the article is worn by the user, further wherein the back guard fully extends above the article waistline when the article is worn by the user; and

wherein the front and rear portions each comprise an absorbent material, further wherein the back guard having elastic positioned only about a periphery thereof.

57. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 56, wherein the front guard and the back guard each further comprise a centrally positioned absorbent material.

58. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 57, wherein the front guard and the rear guard each further comprise elastic positioned about a periphery thereof.

59. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 56, wherein the front guard and the back guard each have a length of approximately 1.0 to 10.0 inches.

60. (Currently Amended) An incontinence article, comprising:

a front portion positioned adjacent to a front pelvic area and extending from a waist area to a crotch area when the article is worn by a user;

a rear portion joined to the front portion, the rear portion being positioned adjacent to a rear pelvic area and extending from the waist area to the crotch area when the article is worn by the user, further wherein the front portion and the rear portion extend vertically to an article waistline, being substantially a same level vertically when worn by the user; and

a back guard extending vertically from the rear portion, further wherein the back guard fully extends above the article waistline ~~rear portion and the front portion~~ when the article is worn by the user, wherein the back guard comprises an absorbent material and elastic.

61. (Previously Presented) The incontinence article of claim 60, wherein the back guard extends to a middle back area when the article is worn by the user.

62. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 60, wherein the elastic and absorbent material are commonly positioned.

63. (Original) The incontinence article of claim 60, wherein the elastic and absorbent material are separately positioned.